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*Graeco-Syrian Glass*

Gift of Mrs. W. Scott Fitz

Ancient Glass from Syria.

"**M**ORE transparent than the glass of Sidon" is Lucian's description of a beautiful complexion. Lucian was a Syrian by birth, and he may have been thinking of such glass as that of which many examples have been recovered from graves of Hellenistic Syria. It is not now the original transparency, however, that makes this glass specially attractive to collectors, but the interest of its delicately proportioned and graceful shapes and of the iridescent colors which the long processes of disintegration in the earth have given to its rounded surfaces.

Through the generous gift of Mrs. W. Scott Fitz the Museum has recently acquired a number of unusually beautiful examples of Graeco-Syrian glass. The two cuts presented here illustrate the interest of its forms; and the play of light on its surfaces, even as recorded in the photograph, will suggest to those who have seen ancient glass the charm of the colors, which appear in ever-varying combinations with changes of light and point of view. These pieces are now exhibited in the case of Greek and Phœnician glass, in the room of

Greek terra-cottas. They were obtained by excavations in the region of Damascus.

The significance of these objects, like that of finely-cut precious stones, is dependent on their form, their color and the quality of the material in which they are shaped. In jewels one feels the efficiency of the human skill which has revealed all the beauty inherent in the material offered by Nature. The iridescent glass shows a reversal of that process: the unconscious natural forces have enhanced the maker's design by a contribution of color which he could never have achieved.

S. N. D.

Exhibitions.

THE EXHIBITION OF JAPANESE SWORD GUARDS, or tsuba, announced in the last Bulletin, will be opened in the Japanese cabinet early in April. The tsuba is a small transverse plate of metal placed between the grip and blade of a sword to protect the hand from a glancing blow. About five hundred specimens are comprised in the present exhibition, products of the common hand, the skilled, the expert, and the master hand. These pieces represent nearly every phase of metal working, including casting, forging, chasing, stamping, inlaying, damascening and incrustation work.

The Museum is fortunate in having in its service an artist in metal, Mr. Kakuya Okabe, whose training in Japan and whose studies since have enabled him to provide the material for a historical and descriptive catalogue of the exhibition, which will remain as its memorial and as a book of reference for this branch of Japanese art. The volume contains, in addition to the catalogue proper, a brief history of tsuba making and an alphabetical index to artists and schools. Many allusions and mythological stories, a knowledge of which is useful in this and other branches of Japanese art, are explained. It is illustrated by reproductions of drawings by Mr. Okabe and by half tones of a

number of the specimens exhibited. The catalogue will be sold at the Museum for \$0.75, and will be sent post-paid for \$0.80.

AN EXHIBITION OF JEWELRY arranged in the Wood Carving Room includes brooches, pendants, necklaces, watches and about sixty rings. The pieces are of elaborate workmanship and set with many stones, and come from Spain, Italy, Hungary, Persia, Portugal, France and India. Some brilliant bits of Jeypur enamel are shown.

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